



**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: December 21, 2005

Division: County Administration

Bulk Item: Yes X No     

Department: County Administration

Staff Contact Person: T. Willi

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**AGENDA ITEM WORDING:**

Approval and direction to the County Administrator to take full advantage of available FEMA Hazard Mitigation Grant Program monies for eligible Monroe County applicants as a result of Federal Disaster Declaration for Hurricane Wilma.

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**ITEM BACKGROUND:** Authorized under Section 404 of the Robert T. Stafford Disaster Relief and Emergency Assistance Act, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides grants to States and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

Projects require a 25% local or state match, Community Development Block Grants may be used for this purpose. See attached information.

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**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:**

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**CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:**

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:**

**Approval**

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**TOTAL COST:** TBD

**BUDGETED:** Yes      No X

**COST TO COUNTY:** TBD

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:**                     

**REVENUE PRODUCING:** Yes      No      **AMOUNT PER MONTH**      **Year**     

**APPROVED BY:** County Atty      OMB/Purchasing      Risk Management     

**DIVISION DIRECTOR APPROVAL:** Thomas J. Willi  
(TYPE NAME HERE)

**DOCUMENTATION:** Included X Not Required     

**DISPOSITION:**                                     

**AGENDA ITEM #**

**What is the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program?**

Authorized under Section 404 of the Stafford Act, the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) administered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) provides grants to States and local governments to implement long-term hazard mitigation measures after a major disaster declaration. The purpose of the program is to reduce the loss of life and property due to natural disasters and to enable mitigation measures to be implemented during the immediate recovery from a disaster.

**Who is eligible to apply?**

Hazard Mitigation Grant Program funding is only available to applicants that reside within a Presidentially declared disaster area. Eligible applicants are

- State and local governments

- Indian tribes or other tribal organizations

- Certain non-profit organizations

Individual homeowners and businesses may not apply directly to the program; however, a community may apply on their behalf.

**What types of projects can be funded by the HMGP?**

HMGP funds may be used to fund projects that will reduce or eliminate the losses from future disasters. Projects must provide a long-term solution to a problem, for example, elevation of a home to reduce the risk of flood damages as opposed to buying sandbags and pumps to fight the flood. In addition, a project's potential savings must be more than the cost of implementing the project. Funds may be used to protect either public or private property or to purchase property that has been subjected to, or is in danger of, repetitive damage. Examples of projects include, but are not limited to:

- Acquisition of real property for willing sellers and demolition or relocation of buildings to convert the property to open space use

- Retrofitting structures and facilities to minimize damages from high winds, earthquake, flood, wildfire, or other natural hazards

- Elevation of flood prone structures

- Development and initial implementation of vegetative management programs

- Minor flood control projects that do not duplicate the flood prevention activities of other Federal agencies

- Localized flood control projects, such as certain ring levees and floodwall systems, that are designed specifically to protect critical facilities

- Post-disaster building code related activities that support building code officials during the reconstruction process

**How are potential projects selected and identified?**

The State's administrative plan governs how projects are selected for funding. However, proposed projects must meet certain minimum criteria. These criteria are designed to ensure that the most cost-effective and appropriate projects are selected for funding. Both the law and the regulations require that the projects are part of an overall mitigation strategy for the disaster area.

The State prioritizes and selects project applications developed and submitted by local jurisdictions. The State forwards applications consistent with State mitigation planning objectives to FEMA for eligibility review. Funding for this grant program is limited and States and local communities must make difficult decisions as to the most effective use of grant funds.

**What are the minimum project criteria?**

There are five issues you must consider when determining the eligibility of a proposed project.

- Does your project conform to your State's Hazard Mitigation Plan?

- Does your project provide a beneficial impact on the disaster area? i.e. the State

- Does your application meet the environmental requirements?

- Does your project solve a problem independently?

- Is your project cost-effective?

**How much money is available in the HMGP?**

The amount of funding available for the HMGP under a particular disaster declaration is limited. The program may provide a State with up to 7.5 percent of the total disaster grants awarded by FEMA. States that meet higher mitigation planning criteria may qualify for 20 percent under the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000.

FEMA can fund up to 75% of the eligible costs of each project. The State or grantee must provide a 25% match, which can be fashioned from a combination of cash and in-kind sources. Funding from other Federal sources cannot be used for the 25% share with one exception. Funding provided to States under the Community Development Block Grant program from the Department of Housing and Urban Development can be used to meet the non-federal share requirement.

**How do I apply for the HMGP?**

Following a disaster declaration, the State will advertise that HMGP funding is available to fund mitigation projects in the State. Those interested in applying to the HMGP should contact their local government to begin the application process. Local governments should contact their State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

**What is the deadline for applying for HMGP funds?**

Applications for mitigation projects are encouraged as soon as possible after the disaster occurs so that opportunities to do mitigation are not lost during reconstruction. The State will set a deadline for application submittal. You should contact your State Hazard Mitigation Officer for specific application dates.

**How long will it take to get my project approved?**

It is important for applicants to understand the approval process. Once eligible projects are selected by the State, they are forwarded to the FEMA Regional Office where they are reviewed to ensure compliance with Federal laws and regulations. One such law is the National Environmental Policy Act, passed by Congress in 1970, which requires FEMA to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of each proposed project. The time required for the environmental review depends on the complexity of the project.